

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current
scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of Information

April 23, 1946 (Rev.)

FAMINE EMERGENCY CAMPAIGN

LEST WE FORGET

"Our own objectives are clear; the objective of smashing the militarism imposed by war lords upon the enslaved peoples -- the objective of liberating the subjugated nations -- the objective of establishing and securing...FREEDOM FROM WANT...everywhere in the world."

----Franklin D. Roosevelt

From the very beginning of World War II we have had as one of our primary objectives the prevention of death by famine. President Truman said on his return from Potsdam in August 1945: "Unless we do what we can to help, we may lose...what we won."

HERE'S WHERE WE STAND:

Because of the effects of war and severe droughts, world food production per capita has been cut 12 percent below prewar. In continental Europe, which normally imports 10 percent of its food, production was 20 percent below prewar levels. Drought in French North Africa cut food output to half of prewar -- turning an export area into a deficit area. Drought sharply reduced crops in South Africa. The wheat crop in Argentina was two-thirds of prewar normal -- second short crop in a row. The Far East has less than one-fourth as much rice for export to deficit areas as before the war. Food output in Japan is three-fourths of prewar. Production was below average in Australia, India, China, Manchuria, Formosa, and many parts of Latin America. Russia has stepped up food production but is still below prewar.

While we in the United States have been consuming food at a daily rate of about 3,400 calories per person, the urban population in half of Europe is existing on less than 2,000 calories and in some areas less than 1,500 calories a day per capita.

Add up all these and other facts and the result is that 500 million people -- one quarter of the world's population -- are hungry today. Millions of these are starving.

Conditions in food-short countries range all the way from those of people who are eating almost as well as ever to those of people who are dying in the streets or by the roadside. City people are generally worse off than farm people, because they cannot grow their own food. The poor, the weak, the sick, and the homeless naturally suffer the most. The situation of children is most tragic, since undernourishment condemns them to permanent deformity, emotional shock, and embittered minds.

During the winter and spring the food situation became steadily worse as the hungry lands lived up the meager remnants of the last harvest, with the next harvest still many weeks away. In many countries reserves are gone. Their only hope lies in what they can import from the few nations that have surpluses.

Meeting the crisis of starvation until new harvests come is the first necessity. Even after that, the world is expected to remain so short of food that emergency programs may be needed to avert a new crisis as stocks dwindle in early 1947.

IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT:

The President's Famine Emergency Committee of 13 members with former President Hoover as honorary chairman and Chester C. Davis as chairman, formulates guiding policies of the program to help feed the starving millions. Upon recommendation of this committee, the President has appointed a National Famine Emergency Council of about 125 members to take the lead in their organizations and areas to explain both the needs and the methods for food conservation. The Council also submits recommendations.

PA-5

The Department of Agriculture has administrative responsibility for carrying out the program. The Secretary of Agriculture has appointed State Managers (State Directors of the Production and Marketing Administration) and County Managers (County ACP Chairmen) to spearhead the Famine Emergency Campaign throughout the country.

WHAT WE CAN ALL DO:

- 1 - EAT LESS WHEAT PRODUCTS AND FATS such as bread, cereals, macaroni, pies, cookies, cakes, salad dressing, etc.
- 2 - WASTE NOTHING. Dress up leftovers. Buy no more than you can use. Clean your plate. Re-use, then salvage kitchen fats.
- 3 - SERVE MORE PLENTIFUL FOODS such as potatoes, eggs, poultry, fish, fruits and vegetables in season.
- 4 - KEEP UP YOUR VICTORY GARDEN and preserve food at home.

ACTION BY THE GOVERNMENT:

President Truman announced, on February 6, a nine-point program to supplement the record food shipments which have been going into devastated countries. In rapid sequence, the Department of Agriculture issued a series of orders to control and limit the domestic use of wheat and the other grains:

Millers were ordered to extract 80% of the wheat as flour, thus getting about 10% more flour out of a bushel (rates are 85% to 96% in most other countries).

Use of grains by feed mixers was reduced drastically, and use of edible flour in mixed feed prohibited. Commercial users' inventories of flour and wheat were limited.

Use of wheat or wheat products for producing alcoholic beverages was prohibited, use of any grain for this purpose out severely, and use of grain for industrial alcohol prohibited.

Purchase of grains to feed hogs to heavy weights, cattle to highest grades, or poultry beyond certain restrictions was prohibited.

Millers were required to reduce production of flour for domestic consumption to 75% of the quantity distributed in same months of 1945.

Food manufacturers were required to limit use of wheat in manufacture of products for domestic human consumption to 75% of the quantity used in same months of 1945.

OPA and the Department of Agriculture adjusted subsidies and price ceilings on livestock and grains so as to encourage marketing and reduce feeding of grain. This measure was aimed particularly at offsetting recent trends toward feeding to heavier weights. Ceiling prices of grains were increased to the parity levels expected to prevail for the next few months.

The Department of Agriculture announced a "wheat certificate plan" enabling farmers to deliver wheat now, when it is needed most, and to take advantage of any possible increase in wheat prices before April 1, 1947. Payments to certificate-holding producers as of a day in 1947 may be reported for taxes as 1947 income.

A bonus of 30 cents a bushel is offered farmers for wheat delivered under the certificate plan by May 25. The Department of Agriculture will also buy 50 million bushels of corn from producers, for which a 30-cents-a-bushel bonus is also offered. In addition, the Department is offering to buy an unlimited amount of oatmeal and large quantities of whole oats for relief purposes.

The Office of Defense Transportation has given transportation priorities to foods that are to be shipped abroad. Other agencies -- such as the State Department, the Department of Commerce, the War Shipping Administration, the War and Navy Departments -- have likewise taken positive steps to carry out the President's program.

As Secretary of Agriculture Anderson said: "These measures have been taken only out of dire necessity to meet urgent relief needs...We are faced with a situation in which every additional bushel of grain that can be saved in this country will save additional lives abroad...These measures are not a substitute for voluntary conservation efforts. They will help to reach our objectives, but there will be continued need for every bit of saving that can be accomplished by every person in this country, especially savings of cereal grains and grain products."

TO EMPHASIZE: Conserve food, especially bread. Cut waste to the bone! America still throws away the richest garbage in the world. It is estimated that 5 percent or one slice out of every loaf of bread baked every day goes into garbage.

Cut down on the use of wheat products, such as bread, macaroni, spaghetti, breakfast cereals, pies, cookies, cakes.

First of all, buy 40 percent less of these commodities. Then use up all you buy. Bread, for example, can be conserved by keeping it cool and moisture proof. If bread gets hard use it for toast, puddings or crumb delicacies. In place of bread, use potatoes. One small serving of potatoes approximately equals a slice of bread, nutritionally. Instead of cakes, cookies, pies -- use fruits as desserts.

If every American will save two slices of bread a day, that will equal the daily bread rations of 20 million starving people.

Fats and oils are desperately needed! They're needed for food to maintain a minimum level of health -- and they're needed for soap to fight diseases now rampant throughout Europe and Asia. Here's what all of us can do:

Buy less fats and oils. Make use of every possible ounce of "used" fats (extra fat on meat, bacon drippings, etc.) Then, if there is any left which cannot be used in the home, turn it in to your butcher or grocer.

A teaspoon of fat a day saved by every man, woman and school child in the United States will mean a total saving of at least one million pounds of fat a day.

Grow a Garden! Use the succession-planting method. Concentrate on things that will substitute for foods being shipped abroad (peas, beans) and things you can can or dry or store or preserve in some way.

For farmers, the main thing is to conserve grain -- by such measures as marketing cattle and hogs at lighter weights, reducing poultry flocks, and raising fewer chickens and turkeys. Farmers are also urged to market their wheat as rapidly as possible, and to raise more wheat in 1946. The Government has made it easier for them to do these things by such measures as the "wheat certificate plan", with bonus payments for early delivery, the raising of current wheat prices to expected parity levels, the action to make available more feed grains, and the adjustments in the feed-livestock ration. In addition, other actions have been taken, such as the establishment of poultry price supports to protect marketings of culled poultry.

WE CAN STILL EAT WELL:

If American consumers manage their food supply right, they need not suffer nutritionally as a result of the food conservation program. The new "emergency" white bread looks and tastes almost the same as before; it is enriched up to the same standards and is nutritionally as good. To make up for eating less grain products, potatoes can be used more liberally. Poultry and eggs can be used instead of scarce meats. We have been consuming on the average more fats than we need for minimum health standards. Growing, preserving, and eating more fruits and vegetables will improve the average diet.

LET'S MEET AND MEET OUR GOALS:

The United States of course cannot feed the world. We produce only 10 percent of its food. But with food production more than a third above prewar we are in best position of any country to help make up the deficits in shortage areas.

Wheat is the most vital commodity for shipment to famine countries because it can best be transported and used to feed the most people in the shortest time. The goal for wheat shipments set last fall calls for 6 million tons in the first half of 1946. If we meet this goal, and if other wheat-exporting countries send a like amount, there will still be a shortage of close to 9 million tons of wheat in war-torn lands. Our shipments in February and March ran less than the million-ton-a-month goal, but we still hope to reach the 6 million mark by June 30.

A million tons of wheat means a half year's supply of bread for 20 million people in devastated countries. Every bit of extra wheat and other food we can save and send will definitely keep men, women, and children from starving to death.

AS A CITIZEN:

In addition to following the principles of food conservation as an individual, you can be an active agent in the interests of hungry humanity by informing yourself, your family, and your friends, of how they can help.

Newspapers, radio and magazines are carrying informative articles. In addition, the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Information, Washington 25, D. C., has available upon request for special purposes a number of publications and other materials.

For local sources of information, refer to your County Emergency Food Program manager, who is chairman of the County ACP Committee in your county seat. Your State Emergency Food Program manager is State Director of the Production and Marketing Administration, Department of Agriculture.

Department of Agriculture informational material on the food emergency is listed below:

Garden and Conserve -- A 2-page fact sheet, summary of Victory Garden Program information.

How Homemakers Can Help Save Food to Fight Famine -- a 4-page fact sheet. Specific suggestions on how to conserve food.

Facts about America's 80% Extraction Flour -- Questions and answers about the new flour, and bread made with it.

Freedom and Famine -- 10-minute film, 16 mm, sound, available from State Film Library, or local film distributor.

Suffer Little Children -- 10-minute film, 16 mm., sound, available from State Film Library, or local film distributor.

AND FINALLY:

We've been living -- since Pearl Harbor -- in a period of "campaigns", "drives", "slogans". BUT THIS IS MORE THAN A CAMPAIGN. It is a voluntary program of saving lives. It is truly a righteous approach to the idea of brotherhood among men.

In the words of the President's Famine Emergency Committee: "To avert hunger, we cannot fail to meet this call. If we fail we shall see a world of disorders which will paralyze every effort at recovery and peace. We shall see the death of millions of fellow human beings. Guns speak the first word of victory, but only food can speak the last word."

